

After the Penguins the two Skua-Gulls of the Antarctic Seas are described—*Megalestris maccormicki* being the special form of the extreme south, while *M. antarctica* was met with only on Macquarie Island.

McCormick's Skua has the distinction of having been seen in 80° 20' S. L., which is further south than any other bird has been yet observed.

The remainder of the volume is devoted to the Petrels and Albatroses, which, as we all know, are highly developed in the Southern Seas, and as regards species and genera are more numerous than any other Antarctic Group, although, possibly, not so numerous in individuals as the Penguins. Dr. Wilson includes 24 of the Tubinares in his list, of which 16 are Petrels and 8 are Albatroses. Excellent accounts of the habits and customs of these birds are given, with critical remarks on the standing of several species.

The quarto plates which conclude the volume are beautifully drawn and coloured.

The 46 figures in the text also deserve our warmest commendation. They are mostly taken from the sketches of Dr. Wilson and Mr. Skelton, but Mr. Royds and others have also contributed to the series. As regards ornithology, at any rate, we are satisfied that the members of the National Antarctic Expedition have executed the task assigned to them in a most efficient manner.

XXXVIII.—*Letters, Announcements, Notes, &c.*

WE have received the following letters addressed to "The Editors" :—

SIRS,—In your last issue ('Ibis,' 1907, p. 483) you state that it is by no means certain that the so-called *Cygnus davidi* is only a "variant" of *C. bewicki*, and not a good species. I think I have sufficient material at hand to be able to affirm that you are quite right.

The original "*Cygnus davidi*" of Swinhoe (P. Z. S. 1870, p. 430; *op. cit.* 1871, p. 416) is without doubt not a true

Swan at all, though I am by no means *quite* sure that Mr. Alphéraky ('Geese &c.,' London, 1905, p. 13) is right in considering it to be only a Snow-Goose. But the bird called "*Cygnus davidi*" by Messrs. Giglioli and Salvadori (P. Z. S. 1887, p. 589) has nothing to do with Swinhoe's bird, and is a Swan, which can be readily distinguished from our common *C. bewicki* as a larger eastern race of that bird. Indeed in 1904 it was actually described and named "*Cygnus bewicki jankowskii*" by Mr. S. N. Alphéraky, in a Russian Sporting Periodical ['Nature and Sport' (Priroda i Okhota), Sept., p. 10], from some heads sent to that naturalist from Ussuri-land by Mr. Jankowski. Mr. Alphéraky mentions only its generally larger size, especially its stouter bill.

I brought from my trip to Kolyma, N.E. Siberia, in 1905, fifteen adults of this Swan, besides some young ones and chicks, in complete skins, and as many heads in spirits. This material I compared with types of Mr. Alphéraky and with all the specimens in the St. Petersburg Academical Museum, together amounting to about 70 examples of *C. jankowskii*, 15 of *C. bewicki*, and 30 of *C. musicus*.

C. musicus is always distinguishable not only by the colouring of the bill, but also by the wing being longer than 560 mm., and by the middle toe with the claw being longer than 147 mm. All the other dimensions in smaller specimens of *C. musicus* (though quite adult) and in larger specimens of *C. jankowskii* merge into one other. *C. musicus* seems not to visit arctic lands at all, at least in Siberia, the northernmost specimens being from Verkhne-Kolymsk (about 65° 4½' N.) and Anadyr.

C. jankowskii breeds in the tundras of Eastern Siberia from the Lena Delta eastwards; some of the Lena specimens, and even a specimen from Monjero (a tributary of the Khatanga), are true *C. jankowskii*, others are undoubtedly *C. bewicki*. During migration it is met with as far to the west as Dzungaria. It is altogether larger than *C. bewicki*, while the yellow of the bill is somewhat more developed, but the best diagnostic character is its much broader bill. Fully adult examples of *C. bewicki* have the maximum breadth of

the bill about 28–30·5 mm., exceptionally reaching to 31 mm., and the length of the bill from the eye is less than 114 mm. In *C. jankowskii* the greatest breadth of the bill is 32–36 mm., rarely 31·5 mm., and in only one specimen (of the seventy) 30·75 mm., but then this specimen has the bill from the eye 122 mm. long. Even in quite young birds this broad bill is a reliable character, as will be seen from the table of dimensions given below.

C. bewicki breeds from the Lena Delta westwards. Among nine specimens labelled "Lena Delta" four are true *C. bewicki* and the others *C. jankowskii*. In the following table the dimensions (in millim.) are taken from old birds, except two quite young ones; the young *C. jankowskii* is from the Lower Yana, and the young *C. bewicki* from Turukhansk on the Yenesei. The Yana bird is somewhat younger:—

Species	<i>C. bewicki.</i>		<i>C. jankowskii.</i>		<i>C. musicus.</i>	
	Old.	Young.	Young.	Old.	Old.	
Wing	500–520	425	400	490–550	570 –610	
Exp. culmen	92– 95	57	54	90– 99	97 –121	
Bill {	from eye	99–113	96	90	108–126	119 –136
	from nostrils ..	39– 41·5	32	31	38– 42·5	42 – 51
	broad	28– 31	24·2	24·5	30·75– 36	32·5– 34
	high	39– 43	31	27	37– 48	41 – 51·5
Tarsus	104–117	104	98	102–114	115 –124	
Mid. toe w. claw ..	127–139	118	114	126–142	150 –164	

About the habits of *C. jankowskii* and its curious dancing-performances during the breeding-time, as observed in the Kolyma Delta, I hope to be able to tell you when not so much pressed by other work.

I am, Sirs, yours &c.,

S. A. BUTURLIN.

Wesenberg, Esthonia, Russia,
July 22nd, 1907.

SIRS,—In the last number of 'The Ibis' (above, p. 379) a "*Coriphilus cyaneus*" is described and figured as a new species. I cannot say whether this is really a new species, but even if such be the case the name cannot stand, as there is already

a *Psittacus cyaneus* Sparrm. (*Coriphilus cyaneus* Wagl. Mon. Psitt. p. 564) (see Salvadori, Cat. of the Psittaci, p. 46).

I am, Sirs, yours &c.,

Turin Zool. Mus.,
July 19th, 1907.

T. SALVADORI.

[We have communicated with Mr. Scott Wilson on this subject. He much regrets the oversight, and proposes to alter the name of the new species to *Coriphilus cyanescens*.—
EDD.]

SIRS,—In the last number of the ‘Ornithologische Monatsberichte’ (pp. 135–6) Dr. Reichenow has written some remarks upon *Phæbetria cornicoides* and *Sterna antistrophe*, which he considers are called for by the statements made in my recent paper in ‘The Ibis’ on the “Birds of the Weddell Sea” (above, p. 325).

As regards the two Sooty Albatroses, the specific distinction of which he is not at present inclined to concede, he says that I “imagine” that *Phæbetria fuliginosa* inhabits the South Atlantic, while *P. cornicoides* occurs only in the Antarctic Ocean. I must say, however, that I never “imagined” anything of the kind. I alluded to the almost impossible task of unravelling the tangled skein involved in defining the range of the two forms, and then proceeded to record the facts that all the birds obtained or seen by the Scottish Expedition in the far south belonged to *P. cornicoides*; while *P. fuliginosa* was only observed by the expedition in the South Atlantic. So far, indeed, was I from saying that *P. fuliginosa* was confined to the South Atlantic that I remarked “it is certain that this Albatros does attain to a higher degree in southern latitudes”—*i. e.* than 58°, the highest in which it was observed by the ‘Scotia’s’ naturalists.

As to the Terns observed and obtained in the far south, Dr. Reichenow claims that they were specimens of his *Sterna antistrophe*. Here, again, I would refer him to my statement (*op. cit.* p. 347) that “the ‘Scotia’s’ specimens do not exhibit the peculiarities attributed to this subspecific

form" (it was described by Dr. Reichenow as *S. macrura antistrophe*). I may further state that Mr. Howard Saunders and I compared the 'Scotia' specimens with the series of *S. macrura* in the British Museum, and were convinced that they were simply typical examples of that species.

I am, Sirs, yours &c.,

Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh,

WM. EAGLE CLARKE.

July 1907.

The Bird-Collection of the British Museum.—We extract the following passages on the additions made to the Collection of Birds in the British Museum of Natural History during the past year, from the Parliamentary Report on that Institution for 1907, which was received on August 27th.

The total number of accessions in the Class "Aves" was 9659, the most noteworthy being the following:—119 specimens from Japan and Corea, collected by Mr. M. P. Anderson, presented by the Duke of Bedford; 500 specimens collected by Mr. M. J. Nicoll during the voyage of the R.Y.S. 'Valhalla,' presented by the Earl of Crawford, K.T., F.R.S.; 526 birds from Western Yunnan, collected and presented by Colonel G. Rippon; 108 birds from Upper Burma, presented by Capt. H. H. Harington; 365 birds from Western Australia, collected by Mr. Shortridge, presented by Mr. W. E. Balston; 168 birds from Western Virginia, presented by H. T. Burls, Esq.; 71 birds from Uganda, presented by Dr. Cuthbert Christy; 205 specimens from Lower Nigeria, collected by Mr. Robin Kemp, purchased; 21 specimens from the River Gambia presented by Dr. E. N. Hopkinson; 19 specimens from Sarawak, presented by Mr. R. Shelford; the type of a new Hill-Partridge (*Arboricola batemani*), presented by Mr. Eugene W. Oates; a specimen of the Australian Cassowary (*Casuarinus australis*) and 10 Birds of Paradise (*Schlegelia calva*), presented by Sir William Ingram, Bart.; 3 Prince of Wales's Pheasants (*Phasianus principalis*) from the Hari River, presented by Colonel P. Molesworth Sykes, H.B.M. Consul-General for Khorasan; 9 types of new species

from Equatorial Africa, presented by Mr. F. J. Jackson, C.B., C.M.G.; 2 eggs of the Standard-winged Nightjar (*Macrodipteryx macrodipterus*), presented by Mr. J. H. J. Farquhar; 7 specimens of birds and 40 nests and eggs from Setubal, Portugal, presented by Don Luiz Gonzaga do Nascimento; 394 birds from Gunong Tahan, Malay Peninsula, presented by the Selangor State Museum; 27 birds from the River Niger, presented by Mr. Churchill Bryant; 4 Wild Turkeys (*Meleagris gallopavo*) from Durango, Mexico, presented by Mr. J. H. Fleming; a valuable collection of North American Birds formed by Mr. Gerrit Miller, and consisting of 4000 skins, including the Maynard Collection of Bahama birds and several types, purchased.

Mr. C. D. Rudd has continued his donations of birds from South Africa and Mozambique, whence large series have been sent by Mr. Claude Grant, who is collecting for Mr. Rudd.

Ninety-one birds from the Solomon Islands, collected by Mr. A. S. Meck, have been purchased. Twenty-seven nests of birds from the Andaman Islands have been presented by Mr. B. B. Osmaston. There have also been received fifteen birds, mostly Francolins, from British East Africa, presented by Colonel W. H. Broun; 1528 specimens of birds from the Ruwenzori Range and the adjacent parts of Equatorial Africa, presented by the subscribers to the Ruwenzori Expedition; 150 birds from Somaliland, collected by Mr. G. W. Bury, purchased; 331 birds from Benguela, collected by W. J. Anson, purchased; 79 birds from Annam, collected by Dr. J. J. Vassal, purchased; 262 birds from the Tian-Shan Mountains, collected by Mr. Kutzenko, purchased; 115 birds from Uganda, collected by Mr. E. Degen, purchased; and 212 birds from Camaroons, collected by Mr. G. L. Bates, purchased.

In the Bird-Gallery, we are told, continued progress has been made in the substitution of well-mounted specimens for those which had become blanché and discoloured.

Birds peculiar to the British Islands.—At the Conversazione of the Royal Society held at Burlington House on June 19th, 1907, Dr. Ernst Hartert exhibited a series of birds represented in the British Isles by peculiar forms, and examples of their Continental allies, for comparison. The following remarks were attached to the “exhibit” :—

“As late as 1892 Wallace accepted only three birds as peculiar to the British Isles (‘Island Life,’ p. 340), and even more recent works have not mentioned more than three or four. Careful investigations, however, have shown that about twenty British birds present constant and often easily recognised differences from their Continental allies. Eighteen of these are exhibited, with their allies, in order to shew their differences.”

The list of birds exhibited, which has been kindly supplied to us by Dr. Hartert, is as follows :—

Birds peculiar to the British Islands and their most nearly allied Continental representatives.

CONTINENTAL FORM.	BRITISH FORM.
1. <i>Erithacus rubecula rubecula</i> (L.).	<i>Erithacus rubecula melophilus</i> Hart.
2. <i>Regulus regulus regulus</i> (L.).	<i>Regulus regulus anglorum</i> Hort.
3. <i>Cinclus cinclus aquaticus</i> Bechst.	<i>Cinclus cinclus britannicus</i> Tsch.
4. <i>Ægithalos caudatus europæa</i> (Herm.).	<i>Ægithalos caudatus roseus</i> (Blyth).
5. <i>Parus major major</i> L.	<i>Parus major newtoni</i> Praz.
6. <i>Parus cæruleus cæruleus</i> L.	<i>Parus cæruleus obscurus</i> Praz.
7. <i>Parus ater ater</i> L.	<i>Parus ater britannicus</i> Sharpe & Dress.
8. <i>Parus palustris longirostris</i> Kleinschm.	<i>Parus palustris dresseri</i> Stejn.
9. <i>Parus atricapillus salicarius</i> Brehm.	<i>Parus atricapillus kleinschmidti</i> Hellm.
10. <i>Parus cristatus mitratus</i> Brehm.	<i>Parus cristatus scoticus</i> (Praz.).
11. <i>Sitta europæa cæsia</i> Wolf.	<i>Sitta europæa britannica</i> Hart.
12. <i>Certhia familiaris familiaris</i> L.	<i>Certhia familiaris britanica</i> Ridgw.
13. <i>Motacilla alba alba</i> L.	<i>Motacilla alba lugubris</i> Temm.
14. <i>Motacilla flava flava</i> L.	<i>Motacilla flava rayi</i> (Bp.).
15. <i>Carduelis carduelis carduelis</i> (L.).	<i>Carduelis carduelis britannicus</i> (Hart.).
16. <i>Garrulus glandarius glandarius</i> L.	<i>Garrulus glandarius rufitergum</i> Hart.
17. <i>Dendrocopus major major</i> (L.).	<i>Dendrocopus major anglicus</i> Hart.
18. <i>Lagopus lagopus lagopus</i> (L.).	<i>Lagopus lagopus scoticus</i> (Lath.).

Proposed Memorial to the late Joseph Wolf, F.Z.S.—A few friends of the late Joseph Wolf have started a fund for placing a Memorial Stone over his grave in Highgate

Cemetery, where, at the present time, there is nothing to indicate that this is the grave of a consummate artist.

It is intended also to purchase a portrait of him, to be presented to the Zoological Society of London. The portrait, painted by Lance Calkin, was exhibited in the Royal Academy of 1890.

By the kind permission of Mr. B. Healey, a small tablet will be fixed at the entrance to No. 2 Primrose Hill Studios, London, where he died.

Joseph Wolf worked for thirty-two years for the Zoological Society of London, in whose Library is a large series of original water-colour drawings taken by him from animals living in the Society's Menagerie, and the good results of his labour can hardly be overstated. This appeal is made in order to enable some permanent mark of the high appreciation in which he was held, to be placed not only over his last resting-place, but also at the Studio where he worked, and in the Rooms of the Society of which he was a Fellow.

Donations to the Fund may be paid to Mr. Robert J. Howard, Shear Bank, Lilford Road, Blackburn.

Pycraft on the Osteology of the Passeres.—At the meeting of the Zoological Society of London held on the 9th of April last, Mr. W. P. Pycraft, F.Z.S., read a paper on the Osteology of the Oligomyodian and Diacromyodian Passeres, which has been since published in the Society's 'Proceedings' (see P. Z. S. 1907, p. 352). After referring to his previous contribution (published in the 'Proceedings') on the Osteology of the Eurykæmid and Tracheophone Passeres, he remarked that there seemed little room for doubt that the Diacromyodian and Oligomyodian Passeres must be regarded as divergent branches of a common stem. The latter suborder, according to his views, included the Tyranniformes, Phytotomidæ, and Pittidæ, while the former embraced the remaining Passeres.

In the present communication some fourteen Families were described, and these were divided into four groups—

Hirundines, Muscicapæ, Laniinæ, and Gymnorhinæ. This arrangement was based not on osteological characters alone, but also on the evidence of pterylosis and certain wing-muscles.

The author proposed to include the Vireonidæ in the Muscicapidæ, and the Vircolaniidæ in the Gymnorhinæ. With this last group he proposed, tentatively at any rate, to place the Paradiscidæ, inasmuch as there seemed good reason for continuing to regard these birds as near allies of the Corvidæ.

New British Antarctic Expedition.—A new expedition to the South Polar Regions has been organized by Lieut. E. H. Shackleton, an officer of the National Antarctic Expedition, who proposes to leave New Zealand in the ‘Nimrod’ early next year, and to establish his headquarters on some spot on King Edward-the-Seventh’s Land, thence to make excursions into the unknown interior. Besides dogs and ponies, a motor-car (of special construction) is to be taken. Two biologists, Mr. James Murray and Mr. A. F. Mackay (Junior Surgeon), are to be members of the expedition. During the winter special attention will be paid to the breeding and nesting of the Emperor Penguin, concerning which some more information is thought to be required (see Geogr. Journ. xxix. p. 239, and xxx. p. 336).

Dr. Bruce’s Arctic Expedition.—We are pleased to be able to state that Dr. Bruce, concerning whose safety some sinister rumours have been spread about, has returned from his expedition into the interior of Prince Charles’ Foreland, and has arrived in Edinburgh. Dr. Bruce and his companions have made a good collection of the birds of Spitsbergen, and, as we are informed, have obtained specimens of several species new to the Avifauna of that group. Of these we may expect an early account from our correspondents in Edinburgh.